

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A computer implementable system for allocation and pricing of classified resources of a web server farm to customers by a resource center comprising: means for providing different levels of service by dynamically allocating and pricing said resources based on customers' changing needs, and their willingness to pay for different service levels, wherein said allocation occurs using a dynamic negotiation between said customers and said resource center, and wherein said dynamic negotiation comprises any of:

said customers requesting said resource center to acquire and release resources at any time;

said resource center conducting an auction of all available resources in a shared resource pool at predetermined intervals to determine said allocation and pricing of said resources for a subsequent time interval; and

said resource center publishing said prices at which said resources of said shared resource pool can be acquired or released by said customers, whereby said customers use said prices for determining whether to request releasing or acquiring said resources,

wherein said allocating of said resources comprises transferring, by said resource center, said resources from one customer to another customer,

wherein said dynamically allocating and pricing resources is accomplished through mutual on-line negotiations between said customers and said resource center through electronic communications, and

wherein said mutual online negotiations takes place between software-based agents representing said customers and said resource center.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) The system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said means comprising:

a mechanism for conducting an online auction of said resources by the resource center in case of non-availability of adequate idle resources to meet a customer request followed by re-allocation of said resources to said customers, updating of billing information and pricing based on the results of the auction of resources;

a mechanism for conducting an online auction of resources at pre-specified intervals of time followed by re-allocation of said resources to said customers, updating of billing information and pricing based on results of the auction of resources; and

a mechanism for publishing the current prices for each class of resources at any point of time and means for updating the current prices dynamically based on requests for release or acquisition of resources by customers, followed by updating of billing information,

the arrangement being such that said mechanisms operate either individually or together in any combination of at least two mechanisms depending upon the requirement.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Currently Amended) The system as claimed in claim [[4]] 1, further including,
means enabling the customers to provide price and service level related inputs to their respective software-based agents,
means for said software-based agents representing customers to monitor the usage of resources allocated to them and the levels of service being obtained, and
means for said software-based agents representing customers to use said inputs from said customers and said usage and/or said levels of service being obtained to dynamically determine when to request the software agent representing the resource center for acquiring or releasing resources at various prices.
6. (Previously Presented) The system as claimed in claim 3, wherein said current prices comprise the current price at which resources are allocated to customers, the new price that would prevail if specified units of resources are released by customers and the new price that would prevail if specified units of resources are acquired by the customers.
7. (Previously Presented) The system as claimed in claim 1, wherein each class of resources has some units dedicated to specific customers and the remaining units can be dynamically allocated to customers by the resource center.
8. (Previously Presented) The system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said resources in a resource center includes servers, storage media, software applications and bandwidth of communication link connecting said servers center to a network.

9. (Previously Presented) A method for allocating and pricing classified resources of a web server farm to customers by a resource center comprising providing different levels of service by dynamically allocating and pricing said resources based on said customers' changing needs, and their willingness to pay for different service levels, wherein said allocating occurs using a dynamic negotiation between said customers and said resource center, and wherein said dynamic negotiation comprises any of:

said customers requesting said resource center to acquire and release resources at any time;

said resource center conducting an auction of all available resources in a shared resource pool at predetermined intervals to determine said allocation and pricing of said resources for a subsequent time interval; and

said resource center publishing said prices at which said resources of said shared resource pool can be acquired or released by said customers, whereby said customers use said prices for determining whether to request releasing or acquiring said resources,

wherein said allocating of said resources comprises transferring, by said resource center, said resources from one customer to another customer,

wherein said dynamically allocating and pricing resources is accomplished through mutual on-line negotiations between said customers and said resource center through electronic communications, and

wherein said mutual online negotiations takes place between software-based agents representing said customers and said resource center.

10. (Canceled)

11. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 9, further comprising conducting an online auction of said resources by the resource center in case of non-availability of adequate idle resources to meet a customer request followed by re-allocation of said resources to said customers, updating of billing information and pricing based on the results of the auction of resources,

conducting an online auction of resources at pre-specified intervals of time followed by re-allocation of said resources to said customers, updating of billing information and pricing based on results of the auction of resources, and

publishing the current prices for each class of resources at any point of time and means for updating the current prices dynamically based on requests for release or acquisition of resources by customers, followed by updating of billing information,

the arrangement being such that said steps operate either individually or together in any combination of at least two steps depending upon the requirement.

12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) The method as claimed in claim ~~12~~ 9, further including, enabling the customers to provide price and service level related inputs to their respective software-based agents,

enabling said software-based agents representing customers to monitor the usage of resources allocated to them and the levels of service being obtained, and

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enabling said software-based agents representing customers to use said inputs from said customers and said usage and/or said levels of service being obtained to dynamically determine when to request the software agent representing the resource center for acquiring or releasing resources at various prices.

14. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 11, wherein said current prices comprise the current price at which resources are allocated to customers, the new price that would prevail if specified units of resources are released by customers and the new price that would prevail if specified units of resources are acquired by the customers.

15. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 9, wherein each class of resources has some units dedicated to specific customers and the remaining units can be dynamically allocated to customers by the resource center.

16. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 9, wherein said resources in a resource center includes servers, storage media, software applications and bandwidth of communication link connecting said servers center to a network.

17. (Currently Amended) A computer program product comprising computer readable program code stored on computer readable storage medium embodied therein for enabling allocation and pricing of classified resources of a web server farm to customers by a resource center characterized in that, it includes a computer readable program code

means configured for providing different levels of service by dynamically allocating and pricing said resources based on customers' changing needs, and their willingness to pay for different service levels, wherein said allocation occurs using a dynamic negotiation between said customers and said resource center, and wherein said dynamic negotiation comprises any of:

said customers requesting said resource center to acquire and release resources at any time;

said resource center conducting an auction of all available resources in a shared resource pool at predetermined intervals to determine said allocation and pricing of said resources for a subsequent time interval; and

said resource center publishing said prices at which said resources of said shared resource pool can be acquired or released by said customers, whereby said customers use said prices for determining whether to request releasing or acquiring said resources,

wherein said allocating of said resources comprises transferring, by said resource center, said resources from one customer to another customer,

wherein said computer readable program code is configured for dynamically allocating and pricing resources is accomplished through mutual on-line negotiations between said customers and said resource center through electronic communications, and

wherein said mutual online negotiations takes place between software-based agents representing said customers and said resource center.

18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently Amended) The computer program product as claimed in claim 17, further comprising:

computer readable program code means configured for conducting an online auction of said resources by the resource center in case of non-availability of adequate idle resources to meet a customer request followed by re-allocation of said resources to said customers, updating of billing information and pricing based on the results of the auction of resources;

computer readable program code means configured for conducting an online auction of resources at pre-specified intervals of time followed by re-allocation of said resources to said customers, updating of billing information and pricing based on results of the auction of resources; and

computer readable program code means configured for publishing the current prices for each class of resources at any point of time and means for updating the current prices dynamically based on requests for release or acquisition of resources by customers, followed by updating of billing information,

the arrangement being such that said computer readable program code means operate either individually or together in any combination of at least two computer readable program code means codes depending upon the requirement.

20. (Canceled)

21. (Currently Amended) The computer program product as claimed in claim 20 17, further including,

computer readable program code means configured for enabling the customers to provide price and service level related inputs to their respective software-based agents,

computer readable program code means configured for said software-based agents representing customers to monitor the usage of resources allocated to them and the levels of service being obtained, and

computer readable program code means configured for said software-based agents representing customers to use said inputs from said customers and said usage and/or said levels of service being obtained to dynamically determine when to request the software agent representing the resource center for acquiring or releasing resources at various prices.

22. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as claimed in claim 19, wherein said current prices comprise the current price at which resources are allocated to customers, the new price that would prevail if specified units of resources are released by customers and the new price that would prevail if specified units of resources are acquired by the customers.

23. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as claimed in claim 17, wherein each class of resources has some units dedicated to specific customers and the remaining units can be dynamically allocated to customers by the resource center.

24. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as claimed in claim 17, wherein said resources in a resource center includes servers, storage media, software applications and bandwidth of communication link connecting said servers center to a network.